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**To:** [PUGETSOUND-OXYGEN@LISTSERV.ECOLOGY.WA.GOV](mailto:PUGETSOUND-OXYGEN@LISTSERV.ECOLOGY.WA.GOV)  
**Subject:** Draft agenda for Feb. 6th Nutrient Forum & information on Petition to Ecology  
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Greetings,

Here is an update on the February 6 Nutrient Forum and on Ecology's response to a petition for rulemaking that we received last November. As we have mentioned before, our upcoming Nutrient Forum (Feb 6) will be an opportunity to discuss the latest Salish Sea Model findings from our just released Bounding Scenarios report (*note: Appendices will soon be uploaded to the web*). We will also discuss the outcome of the recent petition and what that means for this project.

**Here is a [link to our draft agenda](#) for the Feb 6 Forum. Please be sure to [register for the Forum](#) so we know how many people to expect.**

Ecology received a petition for rulemaking from Northwest Environmental Advocates on Nov 14, 2018. The petition asks Ecology to modify Chapter 173-221 WAC and establish tertiary treatment as All Known, Available, and Reasonable Treatment (AKART) for municipal wastewater treatment plants in the Puget Sound basin. In short, the petition requests Ecology set year-round limits for nitrogen and phosphorus effluent.

**The following documents are available on our website:**

- [Original petition](#)
- [Ecology's letter in response to the petition](#)

Through our research and the latest modeling results, we know that humans are contributing to water quality problems leading to excess nutrients in Puget Sound, and this problem will continue to multiply as our region's population grows. Ecology is using the Salish Sea Model and the Nutrient Forum, to better understand the options for reducing nutrients, including defining discharger-specific nutrient targets. Using the model gives us confidence that we are focused on the most impactful and effective ways to reduce excess nutrients, and a one-size-fits-all approach as requested in the petition may not be the best approach.

While we are denying the petitioner's request for rulemaking, we will continue our work to address excess nutrients in the Puget Sound.

Here is a summary of Ecology's actions in response to the petition (also in the response letter):

- Set nutrient loading limits at current levels from all permitted discharges in Puget Sound and its key tributaries to prevent increases in loading that would continue to contribute to Puget Sound's impaired status.
- Require permittees to initiate planning efforts to evaluate different effluent nutrient reduction targets.
- For treatment plants that already use a nutrient removal process, require reissued discharge permits to reflect the treatment efficiency of the existing plant by implementing numeric effluent limits used as design parameters in facility specific engineering reports.

We will integrate these initial actions with any additional long-term permit actions resulting from the Puget Sound Nutrient Source Reduction Project and the Nutrient Forum during 2019. We will continue to use the Forum to work with stakeholders throughout the region to ensure that the path we take, and the solutions we invest in, will address excess nutrients in order to help us restore and protect Puget Sound. More specific information will be discussed at the Feb 6 Forum.

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Puget Sound Nutrient Source Reduction Project web page:

<https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Puget-Sound/Helping-Puget-Sound/Reducing-Puget-Sound-nutrients>

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